

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #38
5/23/2007

The Judgment of God, The Great Tribulation, The Great Day of God's Wrath
Chapter Sixteen - The Bowl Judgments
The Last Series of Judgments, The End of The Tribulation Period

The sixteenth Chapter is a continuation of Chapter fifteen, which served as its introduction. Chapter sixteen will present God's final and complete judgment upon this wicked world of Christ-rejecting men. We have read where God poured out judgment upon the world, seemingly with the possibility that some men would be persuaded by their pain to turn to God, but **"they repented not," (9:20-21)**. God also sent an angel to proclaim **"the everlasting Gospel unto them that dwell upon the earth, and to every nation, and kindred and tongue and people,"** (14:6) and that angel was followed by another angel warning mankind about the coming judgment of God. This was all done to give one last chance to lost men to repent and turn to God, but there is no indication that men responded to God's warning.

Now, it is time for God to pour out the fullness of His wrath and judgment. This time, there is no hint of anything but judgment. What men are to experience as recipients of this judgment will make the previous judgments seem light indeed. The relating of these judgments is so condensed that, in order to have any comprehension of them at all, we will have to go back to the Old Testament for further details. In this we will discover much in the Old Testament that has an essential relationship with these seven **Bowl Judgments**. It is another verification of the Jewishness of the **Tribulation Period**. The evidence of this uniquely strong relationship with the Old Testament is also evident in that some of the Bowl Judgments are very much like the plagues which God sent upon Pharaoh and Egypt (Exodus, Chapters seven through ten).

In addition, as we examine these seven **Bowl Judgments** we will see they also have a **"fulfilling relationship"** with some of the **Trumpet Judgments** which we studied in Chapters eight and nine. In the **Trumpet Judgments** **"a third of the earth ... seas ... creatures living in the seas ... fresh waters ... etc."** was affected by the judgment. In the **Bowl Judgments** the totality of life on this earth will be affected excepting those who refuse the **"mark of the beast."** In other words, whereas in the **Trumpet Judgments** God was both punishing and warning man, in the **Bowl Judgments** there is no warning or call to repentance, simply judgment in its purity and fullness. In both of these cases, the Egyptian plagues and the Trumpet Judgments, God was giving warning signs to man about what could and would happen, but man ignored them. This is a brief synopsis of how God has dealt with man as man has rebelled against Him. God has patiently and ceaselessly warned man with "a sample" of the judgment man deserves and will get if he does not repent. But, man has ignored God's warning signs and pleas.

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We see that the time has come for judgment without mercy. It will be a time of unprecedented horror for those who have chosen Satan over Jesus and it will be long overdue!

1. And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

The first thing John says is, **“I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels.”** The Greek words for **“great voice,”** **mega** (3173) **phone** (5456), are the source of our English word, megaphone. This **“great voice”** is heard coming out of the Temple, **naos** (3485). The voice is the voice of none other than God Himself and He now gives out the command for the final judgment of His wrath to be poured out upon the earth, and it is done without any expectation of repentance.

2. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

When the first angel flies over the earth pouring out his bowl, a **“noisome and grievous sore”** suddenly afflicts men, but only those who chose to receive the **“mark of the beast.”** Two important characteristics of **“the mark of the beast”** should be emphasized: (1) Everyone who received the “mark of the beast” did so of his own choosing; and (2) Receiving the “mark of the beast” openly and clearly identified an individual as follower and servant of Satan, and thus declared himself as an enemy of God. Therefore, those who have so chosen to follow and serve Satan deserve, should expect, and will receive the same judgment as Satan.

The two adjectives describing the **“sores”** have important meanings. The word translated **“noisome”** is **kakos** (2556) and emphasizes pain. The word translated **“grievous”** is **poneros** (4790) and emphasizes the harm or destruction of the **“sore.”** The Greek word for **“sore”** is **helkos** (1668) and means “an ulcer.” Taken together the meaning is a **“deep, ulcerous, continuously oozing sore similar to an open boil.”** The verb tense indicates that the sores come upon the Christ-rejectors and are not temporary, but remain through this time of judgment.

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The same Greek word for **“sore”** is used in the Septuagint, the Greek translation, of the Old Testament in Exodus 9:10 in describing the **“boils”** with which God inflicted the Egyptians. Just as God placed the **“boils”** only upon the Egyptians, sparing His children, the Israelites, it is the same in this case. This same word was also used to describe the **“boils”** with which Satan inflicted Job (2:7) and was used to describe the **“sores”** which covered the body of Lazarus (Luke 16:21). Like the other judgments which God imposes upon those who reject Him, God had given specific warning to the Israelites that He would inflict them with these **“sores”** if they rejected Him. Just before the Israelites entered the promised land, Moses told the people:

“But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee: The LORD will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed” (Deuteronomy 28:15,27).

When God dictated to Moses the passage in Deuteronomy He used the very same word (as translated in the Greek Septuagint) to describe the **“boils”** that plagued the Egyptians and which He said in Deuteronomy He would inflict upon the Israelites if they rebelled against Him.

In the warning God gave to the Israelites through Moses in Deuteronomy, God was very specific. According to Deuteronomy 28:35 God said that He **“...shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head.”** The **“sores”** will cover their entire bodies, as if they had one large, oozing ulcer covering their bodies from the **“sole of their feet to the top of their heads.”** The knowledge and powers of modern science will be completely helpless in trying to provide help with the pain or any sort of cure. It will be like an epidemic from hell, perhaps intended as a prelude to the suffering that the damned will experience for eternity.

Therefore, when the first angel pours out his bowl of God's wrath upon the Christ-rejectors it is precisely what God had told them would happen. He said it. He meant it. He does it. No one has any complaint against God as the earth is filled with men whose bodies are covered with irrepressible and incurable, pain-inflicting ulcerous **“sores,”** with the exception that none of those who choose to serve God are so afflicted.

Many people today, including many preachers, choose either to be ignorant of God's Holy Word or to reject what He has to say. It is clear that only a foolish person will so determine his own destiny of suffering and pain.